

# CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

## PARENT CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

December 2020

### *FROM THE DESK OF THE PRINCIPAL*

Greetings to CMS Families,

I read these words in an educational article that supports my belief in the importance of everyone's role in our scholar's education.

*Every child, every day is finding a way to feel connected, every child, every day is being challenged by new learnings and experiences, and every child, every day knows they have a champion they can turn to.*

Thank you for assisting us in working toward being champions for our young scholars. During these unique times, it is important that we provide every student with a unique quality learning experiences. We have been working diligently to ensure we are providing educational choices to meet the needs of all students through daily virtual instruction. As we conclude 2020, and break for the winter holiday, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you that have given Central Middle your support this first semester.

Teachers, we are a community with many gifts, specialties and talents, which we share daily with one another and most important, our students. From the classroom, to their homes, our collective efforts to extend learning opportunities to our scholars has been filled with commitment and a willingness to make decisions that may be hard in the present but will have a positive influence in the future.

Parents, you are the critical and the most important piece in the puzzle of education that provides the structure and foundation for our students. I am grateful to you for your encouragement and relentlessness in assisting your child every day to meet the goals of virtual learning. In the spirit of this holiday season, I want to extend my thanks to all of you for everything that you do for our school. We, at Central Middle are very lucky to share in many precious moments with the students.

I hope that you find comfort this season with friends and family whether distant or near; take the time to reflect on the positive as we move into another year. Again, thank you and have a great winter break.

Sincerely  
Rachel Clark, Principal





Greetings,

We started off this school year like never before with our view of normal being redefined daily. As a result of, this constant change, we are learning to adapt and work through many challenges as soon as they are presented. Despite it all, I have high hopes for this school year and Central Middle School's young scholars. We will all learn new things and discover strengths and gain new skills. All of us will improve with technology whether we like it or not and grow in understanding various educational forums.

There will always be challenges ahead of us, but it is important to recognize that we can meet these challenges together. Each student comes to us with their own hopes for success and our goal is to help them address and meet those expectations. Our teachers and administrative team hold the highest standards for all of our young scholars. With high expectations for respect, responsibility, and safety from students, we have focused on creating a positive learning environment where all students embrace their school experiences during these times of virtual learning.

This holiday season, we want you to share many fun moments with your family. When we return, please share with the scholars the importance of attending every virtual class and complete all assignments. I look forward to working with you as we return from our winter break. Have a happy holiday!

Courtney Rachel  
Assistant Principal



Greeting CMS Ram's family!

I am so honored to be your son/daughter's assistant principal for the school year of 2020-2021. I look forward to meeting each and everyone of our scholars in person when the time permits. Even though this school year has been different from any others, I see growth in how our scholars communicate and learn. I am a student focused leader that loves to see my scholars grow and flourish.

Before joining Central Middle, I served in a variety of teaching and educational leadership roles over the past 13 years. I believe that great schools are the results of a collaborative effort among parents, administration, students and teachers. I am looking forward to assisting the faculty in creating a safe and enjoyable learning environment for our scholars.

One of my primary objectives will be to ensure that every student is receiving high-quality instruction from every teacher. In order to do this, I will be providing teachers with access to professional development, feedback on instruction, and reaching out to parents for support with academic and behavioral concerns to ensure our students are prepared to make decision on career readiness.

Please encourage your child to report to their virtual class daily, ready and willing to participate. It is important for them to demonstrate self-responsibility toward achieving their educational goals. Thank you for your support and have a great holiday!

Diya Spann, ED. S.  
Assistant Principal





## STRATEGIES FOR THE VIRTUAL LEARNING WORLD.

### PULL UP A CHAIR AND JOIN US IN THE DISCUSSION OF JAMBOARD, QUIZIZ AND FLIPGRID

Everyone in education is working extremely hard to support their students through distant learning. Educators want to deliver their content, make meaningful connections, and engage their students, all while providing the best education in a distance learning environment. So, let us discuss three ways to make lessons more engaging in the classrooms.

What is Jamboard?

Jamboard is a giant white canvas that is used for out-of-the-box thinking. It can be implemented in any subject for all students. It is accessible via the web through Google Drive, or by using the free mobile app for iOS and Android. It is the perfect tool to use with your students because it supports the 5 Cs of Education, which are communication, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and curation. Students are given the opportunity to brainstorm, research, organize information, and show their work as well as create illustrations, concept maps, timelines, flowcharts, story writing, sketch notes, and digital storytelling components.

What is Quizizz?

Quizizz allows you to conduct student-paced formative assessments in a fun and engaging way for students of all ages. Some of the features include: **Student-paced:** Questions appear on each student's screen, so they can answer questions at their own pace, and review their answers at the end. **Thousands of public quizzes:** teachers from around the world have create many of the great questions on Quizizz. **Quiz Editor:** The Quizizz editor allows you to select questions from any quiz, add images from the internet, and save your progress. **Reports:** The reports give you detailed class-level, as well as, student-level information to use for assessment and evaluation.

What is Flipgrid?

Flipgrid is a website that allows teachers to create "grids" to facilitate video discussions. Each grid is like a message board where teachers can pose questions and their students can post video responses that appear in a tiled grid display. Each grid can hold an unlimited number of topics and each topic can hold an unlimited number of responses. Topics can be text-based or include a resource such as an image, video, emoji, or attachment. Students' responses can be 15 seconds to five minutes, and a maximum recording time can be set. Teachers can also allow students to record replies to classmates' responses.

Thank you for joining us and for more information, please do not hesitate to contact us, we are ready to assist you in these great ideas of learning.

[www.jamboard.com](http://www.jamboard.com), [www.quizizz.com](http://www.quizizz.com), [www.flipgrid.com](http://www.flipgrid.com)



## Counselors' Corner

Greenay Harris, 6th Grade  
Camyra Calmese, 7th Grade  
Chermoan Lindsey-Jones, 8th Grade

### WHY IS GRIT IMPORTANT?

First let's define "grit". It is the ability to persist in something you feel passionate about and persevere when you face certain obstacles. This kind of passion is not about intense emotions; it is about having direction and commitment. When you have this kind of passion, or desire you can stay committed to a task that may be difficult or boring.

Grit is also about perseverance which means to stick with it; to continue working hard even after experiencing difficulty or failure. The research suggests that the ability to be gritty or to hang in with things that are important to you and bounce back from failure is an essential component of success. This is independent of and beyond what talent and intelligence bring to the discussion (Duckworth 2016).

Grit is important because it is an incentive toward achievement and success. Being naturally smart and talented are great, but to truly do well and thrive, we need the ability to persevere. Without grit, talent may be nothing more than unmet potential.

It is only with effort that talent becomes a skill that leads to success (Duckworth 2016). As you read through these paragraphs, remember the importance of staying with a task. Best wishes to you and your family from the counseling department. Have a Happy New Year.

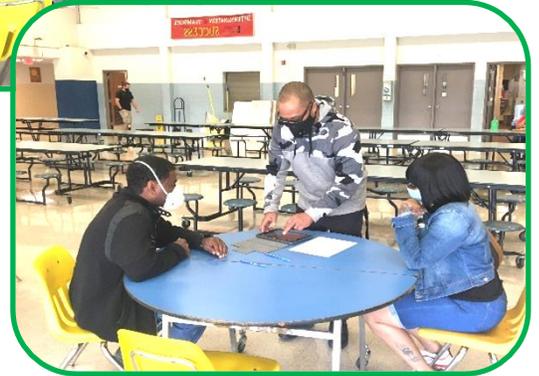
More information on Grit see [www.newharbinger.com](http://www.newharbinger.com)

## Need Assistance with **VIRTUAL** Learning...Contact



Mr. Lindsey  
Home/School Coordinator

Mr. Dickerson  
Home/School Coordinator



### Check out our New Choir and Band Rooms

#### BEFORE



#### AFTER



# Words from Riverview Gardens'

## 2019-2020

### District Teacher of the Year

### Mr. Aaron Heil



Dear Central Middle School parents and guardians,

During the past eight or so months, the Covid-19 virus (Coronavirus) has significantly impacted all of our lives. We understand the hardship that a school closure places on our families, as well as the social and emotional impact it may have on our students. We are deeply concerned about all of our scholars, and want to keep supporting them the best that we can through this process. Our number one priority is the safety and health of our students and staff. If we take proper care of each other then we are doing our part to keep our community safer during this difficult time.

The teachers and staff at Central Middle School appreciate your patience during this time as students, parents and school entities are sailing through uncharted waters. In a short amount of time, the Riverview Gardens School District has transitioned from in-person classes to a 100% virtual learning model. As a parent of a child in second grade learning remotely from home, I understand the burden that this can place on caregivers. However, I can assure you that your student's teachers are here for them. Communication, in this case, is paramount to the success of our school community.

If you are having difficulty navigating the virtual platform, are experiencing technology issues, or just need to check-in on your students' progress, feel free to email us any time. If any link is broken in the communication chain our ability to foster meaningful relationships and facilitate meaningful learning experiences is compromised. Please make sure your contact information is correct in our system in the case that we need to reach out to you. Similarly, our contact information can be found in Google Classroom or accessed through the district's website.

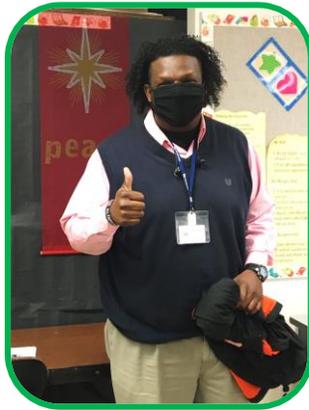
There is no foreseeable outcome to the effects COVID-19 has on our community. Governmental mitigations, local mandates, and school policies are fluid and influenced heavily by the data we receive from a multiplicity of sources. Please know that the teachers and staff of Central Middle School want to see, hear, and feel the experience of our scholars returning to the classroom and engaged in the process of learning and the shared experiences of achieving goals both personal and prescribed. I am not one that usually buys into kitsch phrases and empty slogans, but we truly are all in this together. Please feel free to contact me at any time and I will perform my due diligence to ensure that your scholars' needs are communicated and met to the best of my ability.

I would like to end this by saying that "a new normal" is not necessarily the goal that we are trying to achieve. From a global perspective, the world is changing faster than we can adapt. Perhaps, collectively we need to be involved in critical discussions of a new vision and how we can collaborate and collectively ensure that the needs and dreams of our scholars are met and pushed beyond our expectations. I am willing and excited to participate in that discussion. I look forward to hearing from you and how we can support the community that we serve.

Mr. Heil  
aheil@rgsd.k12.mo.us



# Even Though You are There and We Are Here... We Are Only A Phone Call/Email Away



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# Suggestions for Virtual Learning Justice Frazier, 8th Grade



Welcome to how to be successful in Virtual learning!

I am your host Justice and I am excited to give you some super cool tips on how I am successful in virtual learning!

*! Disclaimer!*

*These tips I am giving may not work for everyone since each student is different with how they learn but they should at least help!*

Let's start off with some basic things, assignments.

Even if you have a “pacer center assistance” teaching you or an actual teacher through “Zoom or Google Meets” you definitely have assignments. The best thing to do is always check for them and get them done as soon as possible to avoid missing assignments. Now I understand that procrastination is much more fun and easier than doing the work but to be good at this whole virtual learning stuff you must pay attention to all assignments and their directions. If you don't you could get very lost when working on assignments. Your teachers are trying their best to make it as easy as they can so you can pass! The answers are all there when you pay attention.

## **DO NOT COPY AND PASTE FROM GOOGLE**

It may seem like a good idea to do, but your teacher can tell that your original words are from Google. Restate the question and word the answer how you would tell people about it. You won't understand it if you don't put it into your own words.

## **SET ALARMS AND TIMES**

There are times to play and times to work. You should make time to work without procrastinating so you don't fall behind. Some schools don't have the students and teachers meet on call like others so they give them pacer guides and the work. Some students may not do any of the work and fall far behind missing a lot. If you have a schedule with set times for each assignment and for your own time. I know it can be stressful but the quicker you get everything done the more time you'll have to yourself!

## **ASK FOR HELP**

Some things may be difficult to understand. Ask for help! Friends are always there and even older relatives. Teachers leave their email for the students which means you are welcome to email them with any questions or concerns. It'll be a whole lot easier if you ask for help when you don't understand.

## **DISTRACTIONS**

Try to eliminate all distractions! You can do this by finding a quiet room with no tv or people in it so that you can work and get stuff done without procrastinating. Focusing may be hard but its best to try to get it done as best as you can.

## **DEVICES**

Try to keep the device(s) you work on charged and updated. You can't do the work when its dead. If you can, keep it on the charger when you are on it. Keep it safely put up so it doesn't get damaged by siblings or food and drinks. Please don't eat or drink too close to the device or let little siblings on it if you know that'll lead to disaster.

These are my tips and tricks to being successful for online learning! Now you may think “oh I already do this” and if you do, I applaud you, you shouldn't have much of a hard time when you do these tips!





*L-R: Calvin Tramble, Rachel Clark, Malcolm Holt and Robert Battle*

## Veterans' Day Salute by Valerie Morris

Each year on November 11, 2020, We the People of the United States of America, honor those who have served our country in the Armed Forces. Veterans are the men and women who have served in the military. The branches of service are the Army, the Navy, the Coast Guard, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps. A Veteran may have served during a peaceful time in our country or during a time of war (also known as an armed conflict or in combat)

Do you know of someone who has served in the military? Before working at Central Middle School, we have staff that proudly served our country in one of the branches of service. I would like for them to be recognized and they are:

**Ms. Clark**, our principal, served in the United States Army. She also served during an armed conflict. Ms. Clark, thank you for your service!

**Mr. Tramble**, our 8th grade social studies teacher, served in the United States Army. Mr. Tramble, thank you for your service!

**Mr. Holt**, our custodian, served in the United States Marine Corps. Mr. Holt thank you for your service.

**Mr. Battle**, our 8th grade computer applications teacher, served in the United States Marine Corps. He also served in combat during an armed conflict.

Mr. Battle thank you for your service!

Scholars, as you prepare for college and career readiness, part of your planning might just be to explore a career in the military.

Thank you, Veterans, for your service and your sacrifice. We salute you!



Rachel Clark



Calvin Tramble



Malcom Holt



Robert Battle



# HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM CENTRAL MIDDLE



**WEAR A MASK AND BE SAFE!**

